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Tanzanian scepticism of a militarised East African Federation and underlying military concerns

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Abstract

Attitudes towards a regional military force are of paramount importance when exploring public support for regional integration. Until now, however, scholarly research has not considered the influence of attitudes towards a regional military mechanism in the sub-Saharan African context. Using Afrobarometer data, we demonstrate that military concerns are vital when exploring Tanzanian attitudes towards the proposed political federation of the East African Community (EAC), the East African Federation (EAF). More specifically, opposition to military cooperation strongly influences Tanzanian scepticism of the EAF. This finding is highly relevant given that referendums in the participating member states must be passed to facilitate political integration. Heightened opposition towards military cooperation raises the possibility of the public rejecting a politically integrated EAC. This poses a potential obstacle to the implementation of joint security policies and crucial mechanisms to provide a more stable region at large. We account for alternative explanations of Tanzanian opinion formation and reflect on the strength of military-orientated concerns for investigating public support for the East African project specifically and regional integration in sub-Saharan Africa more widely.

Keywords Tanzania, militarisation, East Africa Federation, security concerns

Introduction

Attitudes towards a regional military force are of paramount importance when exploring public support for regional integration. In the European context (where theories of opinion formation have been generated), scepticism of a militarised European Union (EU) has created opposition to ‘further’ integration processes, calling into question the future of the EU project in its entirety.¹ Instability and conflicts in the East African region have meant that security concerns are of central importance to the regional integration efforts of the dominant regional grouping of the area: the East African Community (EAC). Until now, however, scholarly research has not considered the influence of attitudes towards a regional military force in the East African (or wider sub-Saharan African) area. We suggest that military concerns are of paramount importance when exploring public support for the proposed political federation of the EAC, the East African Federation (EAF), and that these concerns are highly politically relevant given that referendums in the participating states must be passed to facilitate such integration.²

We focus on public opinion in Tanzania, an EAC partner state for which we have comprehensive data to test military-orientated interpretations of integration attitudes. Our key empirical finding relates to the importance of the military aspects of regional integration. Tanzanian scepticism of the EAF is strongly driven by opposition to military co-operation. This raises the possibility, in the context of any upcoming referendum, that scepticism of militarism will drive a No vote, analogous to the influence of the issue of military neutrality on Irish rejections of the Nice and Lisbon Treaty referendums and Danish rejection of the Maastricht Treaty.³ These rejections – for a time at least – derailed the EU integration process and led to the generation of specific military-related protocols/opt-outs to assuage citizens' concerns and facilitate the successful re-running of the referendums.⁴

This article is organised as follows. Following a brief overview of the EAC's economic, security and political objectives, we specify our hypotheses, describe the data used to test the hypotheses (Afrobarometer data from Tanzania, 2008 and 2012) and report our findings. In the discussion section we reflect upon the implications of our findings regarding Tanzanian attitudes for our understanding of the determinants of citizen support for (and opposition to) the EAF more generally. We underline possible referendum-related obstacles to the achievement of full political integration. We also reflect upon the transferability across the context of EU-inspired interpretations of opinion formation: in particular, military concerns are likely to be of relevance in African regional projects more widely because insecurity and conflict are problems which are rife in all of the continent's regions.

Background: the East African Community

Regional unity in East Africa began in the early 20th century through the creation of a Customs Collection Centre, an East African Currency Board and Court of Appeal.⁵ The EAC, consisting of Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, was established in 1967 and was arguably the most sophisticated regional cooperative arrangement in the less developed world at this time. However, in the face of national priorities, the EAC was disbanded in 1977.⁶ From the mid-1980s, the aforementioned states continued cooperation efforts and subsequently re-established the EAC in 1999. Similar to the European model of integration, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania envisioned a new emphasis on socio-economic integration and set the goal to establish 'a Customs Union, a Common Market, subsequently a Monetary Union and ultimately a Political Federation'.⁷ In 2005, EAC countries established a Customs Union, and in 2009, all member states – including the newly acceded Republics of Rwanda and Burundi – signed a Common Market Protocol, which was endorsed in 2010 by all partner states.

The joint defence forces of the EAC partner states is another prominent aspect of East African integration. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in Defence Matters was signed in 1998 and revised in 2001. Under the MoU, partner states have successfully pursued various activities: building confidence among defence forces, developing and testing Standard Operating Procedures for operations in Peacekeeping, and developing strategies for disaster management and counter-terrorism. According to the Secretary General of the EAC, ‘with rising threat of international terrorism and creeping instability...the issues of defence and security have assumed greater importance and significance in the agenda of nations and, indeed, the agenda of groupings such as ours’.⁸ The MoU was recently replaced by an EAC defence protocol under which joint initiatives with regards to the region’s insecurity are to continue. Increasing levels of violence and insurgence in Burundi – and the mass exodus of refugees from the on-going leadership crisis there – highlight the necessity of tackling a marred regional security environment through a joint security mechanism. Regional security matters gained priority in the most recent Heads of State summit (2015), as chaired by Tanzania’s President, Jayaka Kikwete; however, the extent to which leaders will expedite the implementation of relevant counter measures remains to be seen.⁹

The proposed launch of the East African Political Federation in January 2010 was not achieved and there remains a lack of clarity as to the exact framework which political federation might take.¹⁰ Nonetheless, there is a general consensus among partners regarding the mechanism through which political federation is to be achieved: public mobilisation. In the (Wako) Committee – established to consider how EAC integration may be fast-tracked – the governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania emphasise the need to facilitate citizens in learning about, and being engaged in, the integration process; they concluded that ‘a public referendum in the three partner states would appear the most natural policy choice...to create a sustainable political federation’.¹¹ Referendums in the East African region have

predominantly been used as a mechanism to legitimise nation-state powers;¹² however, elite and civil society demand for a referendum on the issue of an EAF cannot continue to be overlooked. Wider citizen involvement and support is perceived as fundamental to a regional integration project that is more successful than the previous (1977) failure.¹³ Given the relevance of citizen support for the legitimacy of the EAF, the prospect of a referendum on the matter is imminent; a referendum that will plausibly be driven in significant part by citizen views of the integration process.

The re-invigorated EAC thus vastly diverges from the original Community on the basis of its democratic foundations. The formation and processes of the original Community were elite driven; private stakeholders and civil society were not involved in the process. In this regard, the original Community represented ‘the adoption of democracy, on formal grounds without any substantive translation... [which ultimately] crippled the prospects of regional integration’.¹⁴ Articles 127 - 129 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (1999) departs from this model by specifying a ‘people-centred’ integration process with ‘an enabling environment for the private sector and civil society’. Public attitudes have the potential to shape and constrain the process of East African integration through the use of referendums to legitimise further integration. In this sense, public perceptions (and support) provide the political foundations for integration in the current EAC.

Over the last decade, there have been significant economic advances in the East African region. With the exception of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) – which has grown at an average of 6.1% per year – the EAC, which grew at an average of 5.8% per year between 2001 and 2009, grew faster than all other economic communities. Each EAC country more than doubled its own GDP in this time frame.¹⁵ Further, intra-regional trade in the EAC is reported to have increased by 23% between 2007 and 2011, the highest among all African economic blocs.¹⁶ Nonetheless, challenges remain at the domestic level: ‘the

integration process has been hit by numerous challenges including poor information flow, language barriers, immigration problems and cross-border crime'.¹⁷ EAC partner states have agreed to the removal of Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) but rules and regulations have not been fully eliminated, posing a hindrance to intra-regional trade levels. Positively, National Monitoring Committees (NMCs) have been set up in all EAC partner states to address NTBs. Further, a Customs Management Act has been established (in 2004) and subsequently revised (2011) to harmonise customs validation procedures in partner states.¹⁸

The leaders of EAC partner states have not tended to act harmoniously in relation to joint policy initiatives, as demonstrated prominently by elite responses to regional insecurity. All partner states are not part of the same AU derived Standby Force: Tanzania is committed to the Southern African Standby Force through its membership in the South African Development Community (SADC); Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi are committed to the East African Standby Force and thus a different security and defence mechanism. When Tanzania recently intervened in the Democratic Republic of Congo through SADC obligation, it went against EAC security and defence protocol, which stipulates that on matters of security and defence, member states should act together.¹⁹ Tanzania's collaboration with countries in the southern African region – in terms of security and trade – does not necessarily imply preference for that region overall, merely that the Tanzanian elite are utilising advantageous ties with such countries that are in near proximity. Nonetheless, the presidents of Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda have advanced their own initiatives in what is now known as the 'coalition of the willing'. Insofar as regional integration is concerned, these latter countries have pursued joint tourist visa arrangements, infrastructure projects and security initiatives without the involvement of Tanzania and Burundi in the process.

Leadership in Tanzania and Burundi over the next few years is likely to play a divisive role in the future speed and direction of the EAC. Burundi's President Nkurunziza has

distanced himself from the help and assistance of his East African counterparts (and international donors, upon which the Burundian economy is dependent) through his decision to stand for re-election for a third term - and win the election despite lacking democratic credentials. During his leadership years, Tanzania's President Kikwete demonstrated renewed Tanzanian commitment to EAC measures through his position as EAC chairperson and face-to-face meetings with Kenya's President Kenyatta. However, with a new Tanzanian president in place since October 2015 elections (CCM's John Magufili), national constitutional issues are likely to take priority – issues which President Kikwete failed to resolve – above regional integration efforts. Thus, with indefinite Tanzanian commitments to the EAC in the long-term (and the implementation of economic, security and political initiatives alike), a furtherance of the 'coalition of the willing' is debateable.²⁰

In sharp contrast to elite narratives on EAC progression, this paper is concerned with citizen standpoints on greater integration in the region. Both local and international elite influences are certainly integral to the development of the EAC, but lacking citizen support could pose an obstacle for policy makers to deliver any such direction, hence key interest in citizen attitude formation on the matter. A recent survey suggests that 85% of Tanzanians approve (or strongly approve) of greater integration with Kenya and Uganda, while 62% further support integration measures with Burundi and Rwanda.²¹ Our aim is to find out if the idea of a militarised EAC explains Tanzanian support for - or scepticism of - political integration in East Africa. We further aim to discuss the real world important implications of our findings for a referendum, which would either legitimise or prohibit further integration in the region.

Hypotheses: explaining support (and opposition) for East African Federation

Using EU-based literature on opinion formation as our departure point, we outline our key expectation relating to the role of attitudes towards a joint military force in explaining support for the political federation of East Africa. The EAC policy domain encompasses

economic, security, social and political objectives at its core, therefore it is also useful to generate alternative explanations of opinion formation: we specify factors that have been crucial in a developed (EU) context (economics, identity and cognitive mobilisation), and an additional factor which we derive from the East African integration case: perceptions of previous integration failures.

Security-related determinants

Opposition to military co-operation has been a source of scepticism in EU member states: without the generation of official protocols and clarifications to overcome antipathy to a militaristic EU, the continuation of European integration would have been subject to question. For Danish opponents of the Maastricht Treaty, 'Denmark's smallness meant that it could not bring Europe up...European aspirations for a common defence and foreign policy were read by many as the first signs of post-Cold War great power politics which might ultimately involve Danes in militaristic adventurism'.²² Danes approved the treaty in 1993 after defence and foreign policy elements were altered. More recently, in the Irish EU referendum context (with regards to the initial rejection of the Nice and Lisbon treaties), concerns over potential loss of military neutrality influenced vote choice. After both initial rejections, protocols and clarifications were needed to unambiguously state Ireland's non-commitment to an EU common defence, to neutralise the military issue, and to facilitate citizens' subsequent approval of the treaty in a second referendum.²³ Similarly, in a non-EU context (North-East Asia), scholars have highlighted the role of security related factors. In two separate analyses of South Korean support for North East Asian integration, perceptions of threat from neighbouring countries (China, Japan and North Korea) were found to be paramount.²⁴

We expect that opposition towards a regional security and defence framework will similarly have paramount importance in the East African context. The prevalence of conflict, terrorist and rebel group action and citizen dislocation in East Africa indicates that matters of

security are likely to be at the forefront of voter minds. Regional integration is perceived as a vital method to overcome instability and provide a peaceful environment. In this regard, if a citizen is in favour of a regional response to security problems, i.e. the formation of a joint army, they are likely to support the further integration of the EAC partner states. Conversely, if a citizen perceives a more militarised region as a response that will draw their principality into neighbouring – currently, Burundian - conflict, they are unlikely to support regional integration initiatives and the security-orientated commitments involved. Notably, we do not infer that a majority of citizens oppose or support a more militarised region overall; we present the rationale that those who are more supportive - relative to those who are more opposed - of a militarised East African region are likely to perceive the EAF more positively.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Citizens who approve a joint military force in East Africa support East African political integration.²⁵

Alternative explanations

We draw on three additional theories of opinion formation, which have gained prominence in the EU context and which will plausibly account for any further variation in individual-level support for the EAF. Aligned to the economic endeavour of most European integration efforts, the first indicates the importance of economic determinants in explaining public support. Gabel and Palmer suggest that European integration differentially affects citizens depending on their level of 'human capital'.²⁶ Citizens with high levels of human capital – who are highly educated and skilled – are equipped to compete successfully in an expanded market with heightened investment opportunities. They are well placed to avail of the market opportunities that follow from the integration process and are able to adapt to economic adjustments that occur. In contrast, those with relatively low levels of education and skills are likely to be less capable of taking advantage of such opportunities and are thus more likely to be threatened by, and be vulnerable to, increased competition. In East Africa, over the past two

decades there has been a decline in the dominance of traditional/subsistence agriculture and a rise in skills-based industries and service sectors,²⁷ leading to the generation of considerable variation in the levels of human capital that citizens have.²⁸ While there remains a vast difference between Europe and East Africa in terms of occupational structure – and human capital levels are, overall, much lower in East Africa than in the EU – we expect that egocentric economic reasoning has similar implications for understanding attitudes to regional integration in both contexts:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Citizens in East Africa with high human capital levels support East African political integration.

The processes of economic and political integration are closely aligned in the EAC context and the relationship between the two may usefully be viewed either as 'linear' or 'concurrent'. 'Linear' models of integration (including, according to Mattli, the EU and the EAC) are characterised by a step-wise process: political unification – the ultimate end goal – follows on from economic integration (for example, free movement of labour, a common market, customs union and monetary union).²⁹ As a result of the economic and political failure of the 'old' EAC, the objective of political integration in the current EAC framework is very closely linked to economic integration.³⁰ The inter-governmental Wako Committee (referred to earlier) has advised an 'overlapping' approach whereby parallel activities of economic stages of integration should be merged to achieve political federation within a shorter period, and it was argued that 'the establishment of the Political Federation should not wait for all expectations of the EAC integration to be realised'.³¹ Thus, if citizens do not support economic integration, it is unlikely that they will support further (political) integration. Conversely, if economic integration is supported, this is likely to spill over, making citizens much more amenable to further integration.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Citizens who approve of economic integration in East Africa support East African political federation

A second alternative explanation relates to the role of identity. As the EU has increasingly impacted upon the everyday lives of its citizens in the non-economic as well as the economic realm – particularly since the Maastricht Treaty – researchers have begun to focus on identity-based explanations of support for (and lack of support for) integration: ‘not only does European integration create economic losers and winners; it provokes a sharp sense of identity loss among defenders of the nation and among anti-cosmopolitans’.³² Scholars have specifically drawn on the psychology of group loyalty to consider how national identity influences scepticism of regional integration processes.³³ A complex relationship has been found: a sense of national identity may either reinforce or undermine support for regional integration.

In order to understand this conditionality, some scholars have focused on how national identity relative to other identities influences attitudes to supra-national authority. For example, Hooghe and Marks have distinguished people with an ‘exclusive’ national identity from those with an ‘inclusive’ national identity, since the latter do not perceive of themselves in terms of one single territorial identity and therefore are more likely to be favourable towards Europe: ‘Country first, but Europe too’.³⁴ Other scholars have focused on the comparison between national and sub-national identity and how this comparison shapes views on regional integration. For example, stronger EU support has been found in peripheral UK regions (Wales and Scotland) since the EU is perceived as a means to assert regional identity distinctiveness, particularly when the relationship between the region and nation is perceived as troublesome.³⁵

Given the importance of sub-national groups in Eastern African – notably tribal/ethnic groups – we focus on the ‘national’ versus ‘sub-national’/‘tribal’ identity distinction.³⁶ The distinction is particularly pertinent in Tanzania as it is the only member state to have followed

a strong nation-building programme since independence. Arguably, the country's socialist leader, Julius Nyerere, played a vital role in this process: he 'forcefully downplayed the role of ethnic affiliation in public life and instead emphasised a single Tanzanian national identity'.³⁷ We expect that Tanzanians with a strong sense of national identity – relative to tribal identity – are likely to be sceptical of the EAF since an addition of this supranational layer constitutes a dilution of national sovereignty.³⁸

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Citizens with a strong sense of national identity, relative to a sub-national tribal/ethnic identity, are sceptical of East African political integration.

Finally, the extent that an individual is aware or knowledgeable about regional integration has had implications for public support in the European context and is likely to be of similar importance in the East African setting. Inglehart used the term 'cognitive mobilisation' to describe the skills necessary to cope with a distant political community (such as the European Community) and argued that those with higher levels of cognitive mobilisation are more likely to absorb information and be familiar with the advantages of regional integration than those with lower cognitive mobilisation levels.³⁹ Janssen and Gabel established thereafter that those more familiar with the topic of European integration were generally less threatened.⁴⁰ In the East African context, concern has been voiced that levels of knowledge and awareness of the EAC are low. For example, an investigation of citizen engagement with the integration process concluded that:

... there remains the fundamental question about how East African citizens can broadly be involved and allowed the space to participate in the EAC integration process...this question has been heightened by what is often described as the lack of knowledge about the EAC amongst the broad masses...this question clearly begs another: whose responsibility is it to educate the citizens?⁴¹

Consistent with this concern, Katera notes that a majority of Tanzanians have negligible knowledge of the EAC: nearly 31% had not heard anything about the Federation; 46% had heard 'a little' or 'some'; only 20% had heard 'a lot'.⁴² Debates relating to future referendums

on political integration in member states frequently highlight the potentially limiting impact of such low awareness levels.⁴³

Following scholars of European public opinion, we expect that there will be significant differences between the many citizens with low knowledge of the EAC and the minority of citizens with relatively high knowledge. Those who are at least somewhat familiar with the EAC are more likely to absorb information on the topic and understand how regional integration can benefit domestic social and political circumstances. In contrast, the cognitively 'unmobilised', who are not engaged with EAC initiatives and future prospects, are less likely to comprehend the meaning of community membership and are hence likely to be fearful of, and unsupportive of, the integration process.

Hypothesis 5 (H5): Citizens in East Africa with high levels of cognitive mobilisation support East African political integration.

Data and modelling approach

Data from the Afrobarometer survey is used to operationalise and test the specified hypotheses. The Afrobarometer is an independent research project that measures public opinion towards the social, political and economic phenomena in 35 African countries on a repeated basis.⁴⁴ National probability samples are used by Afrobarometer to generate samples that are a representative cross-section of all citizens of voting age in each country.

Survey items relating to the EAC are available for three countries (Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda) in Round 4 (2008) and one country only (Tanzania) in Round 5 (2012). Survey rounds prior to 2008 do not include questions that ask respondents about the EAC. We focus on Tanzania (2008 and 2012) since it is the only country for which it is possible to operationalise a survey question relating to citizen preferences regarding regional defence and security.

Dependent variable

The following survey question is used to measure support of an EAF:

‘People have different ideas about how much integration of the economies and political systems of the East African states is the right amount. Some don’t want any integration. Others support complete unification of the governments. Please tell me if you approve or disapprove of ... the formation of a unitary government, including having one East African parliament and president.’

Response categories (for both time points) are on a four-point scale from: (1) strongly disapprove (2) disapprove (3) approve (4) strongly approve (don’t know responses/missing data are not included). The variables were recalibrated such that they run from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 1.

Key explanatory variable

To measure Tanzanian support for our variable of key interest - attitudes to joint East African defence and security mechanisms – we identify the question: ‘Please tell me if you approve or disapprove of each of the following aspects of the proposed integration project, or haven’t you heard enough to say?’ Respondents are specifically asked if they ‘approve or disapprove of the formation of a joint army?’ Response options are as identified above: (1) strongly disapprove (2) disapprove (3) agree (4) strongly agree (don’t know/missing data are not included). The variable was recoded to run from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 1.

‘Alternative’ explanatory variables

To measure a respondent’s attitude towards economic integration, the aforementioned question is also used, but the following parts of the question are operationalised: ‘Please tell me if you approve or disapprove of each of the following aspects of the proposed integration project, or haven’t you heard enough to say?’

‘Free movement of people, goods and services’

‘Customs Union, that is, creation of a uniform regime of tax and rates’

‘Monetary Union, that is, creation of a single East African currency’

Response options are: (1) strongly disapprove (2) disapprove (3) agree (4) strongly agree.

A single scale was generated from these three variables, representing attitudes to economic integration, and the scale was calibrated to run from 0 to 1 (higher score relates to stronger support).⁴⁵

The item tapping a respondent’s level of education is used to measure human capital.

The exact question wording is:

‘What is the highest level of education you have completed?’

Response Options: (0) No formal schooling (1) Informal schooling only (2) Some primary schooling (3) Primary schooling completed (4) Some secondary school (5) Secondary school completed (6) Post-secondary qualifications, other than university, e.g. diploma or degree from a polytechnic or college (7) Some University (8) University Completed (9) Post-graduate (don’t know/missing data are not included). The variable was recoded to run from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 1.

The item tapping a respondent’s level of cognitive mobilisation is worded:

‘How much have you heard about the proposed federation of the East African States, that is, the formation of unitary government for Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, with a joint army, parliament, presidency and economy?’

Response Options: (1) Nothing (2) Small Amount (3) Some (4) A great deal (don’t know/missing data are not included). The variable was recoded to run from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 1.

The following question is used to measure (comparative national versus sub-national) identity:

‘Let us suppose that you had to choose between being a Tanzanian and being a [insert respondent’s tribal/ethnic group]. Which of the following statements best expresses your feelings? Response options: (1) I feel only (insert R's ethnic identity) (2) I feel more (insert R's ethnic identity) (3) I feel equally (insert R's ethnic identity) and Tanzanian (4) I feel more Tanzanian (5) I feel only Tanzanian (don’t know/missing data are not included).⁴⁶ The variable was recoded to run from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 1.

To measure whether a respondent entered adulthood and had their formative political experiences in the aftermath of the failure of the first EAC but prior to the generation of the new EAC, respondents were coded (1) if they were in adulthood during the dis-integration years (ages 34+), and coded (0) if their adulthood has only involved regional integration experience under the new framework (ages 18-33). (Demographic controls are also included in the analysis: males were coded 1 and females were coded 0. Respondents from a rural background were coded 1 and respondents from an urban background 0.)

Modelling approach

We conduct a number of regression models to test our hypotheses. Our dependent variable (attitudes to political unification) is a semi-continuous scale variable, therefore Ordinary Least Squares regression is appropriate. The variables used to explain support for EAF may be distinguished in terms of the extent to which they may be endogenous to the dependent variable. The variable used to test our key hypothesis, ‘attitudes towards a joint army’ is from a battery of questions which explicitly mentions the EAC, therefore, it is likely to be somewhat exogenous to the dependent variable relative to the (more endogenous) variable that we use to test for our ‘alternative’ explanations of public support. In order to test for the full predictive strength of these latter factors, we first run, at each time point, models with only the relatively exogenous variables (identity, age and education) before including the more endogenous economic variable (which also mentions the EAC in the question wording).

Finally, the variable of crucial interest – attitudes towards a joint army – is entered into a full model with all explanatory variables.⁴⁷

Results

In the full models containing all predictor variables at both time points (model 3 and model 6) the results concerning our hypothesis of crucial interest are stark. The military factor is by far the strongest predictor of integration attitudes in both 2008 and 2012. The economic integration variable is also a significant predictor at both time points, but of much less substantive importance than the military predictor.

- Table 1 about here -

Due to the dominance of the military variable in our full model, we inspect a model containing all variables apart from the military variable. The results show a consistently strong role for the economic integration variable (model 2 and model 5). This suggest that attitudes towards economic integration and attitudes towards military integration are both related to full political integration and are also related to each other, but when a full regression model isolates the unique impact of each (i.e. model 3 and 6), it emerges that it is attitudes towards military integration which is by far the strongest predictor.⁴⁸

The results for our ‘alternative’ explanations of public support are mixed in the full and partial models. At both time points, across all models, education does not emerge as significant. There are inconsistencies regarding age (which is significant in 2012 but not 2008), identity (which is significant in 2008 but not 2012), and cognitive mobilisation (which is significant in 2012 but not 2008).

Discussion

Opinion formation: value of military-orientated concerns

The EAC provides a particularly useful case to test (EU-generated) military related determinants of citizen attitudes since in contrast to many regional communities across the globe, which are explicitly based on economic criteria, the EAC considers joint defence and security as crucial to integration progression. Indeed, providing a peaceful and stable environment in the East African region is perceived as crucial to achieving the economic (Customs Union, Common Market, Monetary Union) and political objectives of the EAC. There are various international and internal pressures to legitimise the EAC process and involve citizens in an effective way. This analysis of citizen attitude formation provides an evidence-based discussion on the legitimacy of an East African Federation that is driven in significant part by intentions to create a more militarised region.

Tanzania provides a particularly interesting case study to test for military-related determinants of citizen support for the EAF. Tanzania is a relatively neutral country, which borders all of its EAC partner states. Rebel and terrorist group activities are much more widespread in Tanzania's neighbouring countries, indicating why thousands of fleeing refugees have re-located to Tanzania over recent years. We suggest that perceptions of a joint East African military force are a particularly prevalent explanation of attitudes towards further political integration because the objective of political integration entails greater involvement in the unstable region at large.

It appears from our results that support for an East African joint army has a striking effect on Tanzanian attitudes. Parallel to the importance of military concerns in driving attitudes in Ireland and Denmark, support of a joint army is a significant factor in driving Tanzanian attitudes towards further (political) integration. This finding suggests that Tanzanians perceive political integration as a phenomenon that essentially needs to be underpinned by military capabilities. Support of a joint military and defence force implies support for political integration; scepticism of such joint capabilities (and perhaps relative

support of Tanzanian's military contributions elsewhere, for example, in SADC) implies scepticism of the EAF. In the eyes of Tanzanians, at least, EAF is thus perceived in significant part as a security network. A comparison of the influence of attitudes towards a joint army on EAC attitudes in all partner states would reveal if this relationship is indeed unique to Tanzania's neutral outlook, or prevalent in all countries, therefore suggesting the underpinning military characteristics of EAC political integration more broadly.

Opinion formation: value of 'alternative' explanations

It emerges from our analysis that alternative (EU-generated) explanations of public opinion also have strength (albeit limited) in the East African region. In a similar vein to citizens in Europe, Tanzanians evaluate political integration with respect to key aspects of economic integration. The framing of economic and political integration in East Africa as 'overlapping' and 'complementary' seems to have an effect on how citizens envision integration overall.⁴⁹ Nonetheless, the effect of the economic factor is dwarfed by the effect of military concerns. Further, the findings for identity and cognitive mobilisation are mixed and no significant relationship emerges between educational qualifications and support for the EAF, suggesting that the economic consequences of regional integration in East Africa are yet to filter down and be 'felt' by ordinary African citizens.

In addition to testing EU generated opinion formation theories, the results of this paper demonstrate that exploring expectations unique to the East African region are revealing. Prior (failed) attempts towards regional integration in East Africa and resulting animosity and tension between partner states are of importance to Tanzanian opinion formation towards the current EAC. Having entered adulthood during the period of the first EAC collapse prompts scepticism of future political integration in Tanzania (2012). Entering adulthood during current EAC efforts has a relatively positive influence on Tanzanian attitudes. That the relationship is not present for the 2008 Tanzania data is puzzling; nonetheless, that Tanzanian attitudes are

influenced at least to some extent by this ‘experience’ factor implies the importance of generating determinants specific to a given context.

A further unique aspect of regional integration in East Africa – and across the continent more generally – concerns the commitment of nation-states towards multiple regional integration initiatives. In East Africa alone, there are five main regional groupings, including the EAC, SADC, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), IGAD (International Authority on Development) and ECCAS (Economic Community of Central African States), which overlap each other, arguably hindering liberal economic development.⁵⁰ Since the EAC is the most ambitious regional integration project, with referendums on the agenda to achieve full political integration, it has been of primary importance in this paper to explain the determinants of attitudes towards it. However, that member states have commitments to other regional integration arrangements potentially has a direct effect on support for – or scepticism of – the EAC. For example, Tanzanian support for the stated military objectives of SADC will plausibly underlie scepticism of parallel integration measures in the EAC, particularly if the conflict in Burundi escalates further. Citizens located in closer proximity to the southern border of Tanzania will arguably display such SADC preference to a greater extent. Our analysis does not have data to test for the relative preference for one integration project over another, but future research on the determinants of attitudes towards regional integration in Africa should account for such multiple memberships.

Implications of findings for referendums on East African Federation

This analysis provides an evidence-based discussion regarding the legitimacy of an EAF by outlining the underling motivations of citizen support. Attitudes towards a joint East African army are likely to play a particularly important role in determining vote behaviour in EAC integration referendums, in Tanzania at least. The manner in which they do so will

plausibly depend upon the details of the treaty or agreement that is put to the people.⁵¹ If, for example, strong military co-operation is detailed, the salience of security issues will be raised, potentially leading to significant Tanzanian opposition to the treaty/agreement. In this scenario, a ‘two-speed’ East African integration process is plausible, in which Tanzania and Burundi are left behind as the ‘coalition of the willing’ accelerates further. The EAC elite might find it necessary to issue specific protocols or military opt-outs to assuage the Tanzanian (and perhaps wider) public on the issue of a joint military force. If the East African elite fail to provide a referendum in the short-term, this analysis highlights the reality that EAF legitimacy can be withdrawn on the basis of underlying military concerns, potentially inhibiting the long-term success of the integration project overall.

An additional factor to consider includes the role of second-order national elections. East African referendums could arguably be used as a vehicle for expressing citizen satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the domestic government and thus referendums will not approximate high quality deliberative events.⁵² In the EU context, voter emotions have been demonstrated to substantively influence vote choice: relative to anxious voters, angry voters rely more on second-order issues (domestic politics) when evaluating the EU.⁵³ If emotions of fear and anxiety are high among an East African electorate – a likely impact of instability in the region – citizen engagement with the specific implications of the EAC will arguably be prevalent. In this instance, campaigning from the EAC elite will be divisive in driving vote choice. On the contrary, if voters are politically dissatisfied and angered by widespread instability, protest votes directed at national administrations may be more credible. Further research on this topic in the East African context would be revealing.

Conclusion

Military concerns are integral to an investigation of support for regional integration initiatives. This analysis demonstrates that a citizen's attitude with regards a joint military force has paramount explanatory value in a very different developing context (the EAC) relative to the developed context (the EU) in which this theoretical interpretation was first generated. This central finding has specific implications for the future of integration in the East African region. Peace and security concerns are at the forefront of EAC discussions - the EAC elite will need to assuage citizens with military concerns if the EAF is to be a legitimate and truly 'people-driven' project. Further, it prompts the exploration of regional integration attitudes elsewhere in Africa (and the world) through EU-generated opinion formation interpretations.

Table 1: Predicting support for East African Federation (OLS Regression)

	Tanzania 2008			Tanzania 2012		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Rural	-.037 (.026)	-.028 (.025)	-.009 (.018)	.061*** (.016)	.055*** (.015)	.014** (.013)
Male	-.045 (.023)	-.019 (.023)	.003 (.017)	-.039* (.015)	.000 (.015)	.005 (.013)
Older	.022 (.023)	.017 (.022)	.026 (.016)	-.047** (.016)	-.038 (.015)	-.027* (.013)
Highly educated	.017 (.089)	.028 (.087)	.024 (.064)	-.031 (.054)	-.086 (.052)	-.033 (.045)
Strong national identity	-.149** (.044)	-.144** (.042)	-.048 (.031)	-.047 (.029)	-.031 (.028)	.015 (.024)
High EAC awareness		-.015 (.033)	-.032 (.024)		.127*** (.029)	.063* (.025)
Approve Economic Integration		.396*** (.039)	.081** (.031)		.394*** (.027)	.104*** (.026)
Approve Joint Army			.685*** (.025)			.512*** (.019)
Constant	.447*** (.06)	.173** (.063)	.047 (.047)	.425*** (.037)	.126** (.039)	.049 (.034)
Adj. R2:	.016	.115	.525	.012	.125	.343
N:	895	895	895	2104	2104	2104

Note: Afrobarometer data, available at: <http://afrobarometer.org/>. Figures are unstandardised co-efficients with standard errors in parenthesis. The dependant and all predictor variables run from 0 to 1.

Levels of statistical significance are *.05, **.01, ***.001.

Notes

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² Wako Report, East African Community: Report of the Committee on Fast Tracking East African Federation, Arusha, Tanzania, 2004, http://federation.eac.int/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=100&Itemid=70 (15 April 2016).

³ The Maastricht (1993), Nice (2003) and Lisbon (2009) Treaties were approved voluntarily by member states to (among other aims) make the EU more efficient and transparent (Lisbon), to prepare for new member countries (Nice) and to introduce new areas of cooperation – such as the single currency (Maastricht).

⁴ J Garry, Direct democracy and regional integration: citizens' perceptions of treaty implications and the Irish reversal on Lisbon, *European Journal of Political Research*, 52 (1), 2013, pp.94-118.

⁵ P Kasaija, Regional Integration: A Political Federation of the East African Countries?, *African Journal of International Affairs*, 7 (1), 2004, pp.21-34.

⁶ For discussion on the reasons for the failure of the original EAC see A. Hazlewood, The end of the East African Community: what are the lessons for regional integration schemes?, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 18 (1), 1979, pp.40-58.

⁷ *Treaty Establishing the East African Community*, Article 5 (2), 1999, <http://www.eac.int/treaty/>, (15 April 2016).

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⁹ F Olouch, Burundi: Will EA Presidents Embrace Nkurunziza after re-election, *AllAfrica*, 25 July 2015.

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¹¹ Wako Report, East African Community: Report of the Committee on Fast Tracking East African Federation, Arusha, Tanzania, 2004, http://federation.eac.int/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=100&Itemid=70 (15 April 2016), p.2.

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- ⁴⁵ At both time points, all three items load highly on a single dimension in a Principal Component Analysis (extraction values are consistently above .7 in the 2008 data and above .6 in the 2012 data).
- ⁴⁶ We do not foresee social desirability issues regarding identity. In countries where tribal/ethnic competition is heightened, respondents plausibly suppress their tribal identification, or perceptions on national politics, however, given Tanzania's non-turbulent, peaceful status in this regard, desirability problems are not foreseen.
- ⁴⁷ All cross-sectional survey work is beset, to some extent, by endogeneity problems. As identified, some predictor variables are explicitly based on an aspect of East African integration (e.g. military or economic). If the respondent is supportive of integration on these aspects they are likely to be supportive of the aspect of integration that serves as our dependent variable (full political integration). Hence, these various aspects of integration may be seen as correlating rather than being causally related. An implication is that any 'predictive strength' (in terms of being construed as causally predictive) of a variable in a regression model may be inflated. This however, is not so problematic insofar as our aim is to assess the 'relative strength' of security-related determinants of attitudes in the presence of alternative explanations.
- ⁴⁸ Analysis was carried out for Kenyan and Ugandan cases (data is only available for 2008, an item tapping support of a 'joint army' is not available). The item used to measure the dependent variable (political unification) is the same as the above (Tanzanian) case, although response options are on a 5-point scale, therefore recalibrated to a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 1. Without the presence of a 'joint army' variable, the item tapping support for monetary union is the strongest explanatory variable in both Kenyan and Ugandan cases. The three items tapping support of economic integration are not combined into a singular scale (as in the Tanzanian case) due to low Principal Component Analysis loading factors. Tables are provided on request for these two countries. Notably, attitudes towards economic integration are key predictors of attitudes towards political integration in Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. Of import for future research is the effect of economic considerations when accounting for joint army preferences in all three countries.
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